

A
SERMON,
UPON THE
Being of God,
AND THE
Mediation of Christ.

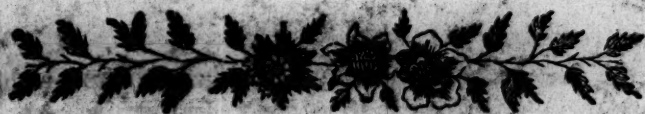
BY AARON PUTNAM, A.M.
PASTOR OF THE FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, IN
POMFRET.



NEW-LONDON:
PRINTED BY SAMUEL GREEN.

1798.





A S E R M O N, &c.

1st TIMOTHY, ii, 5-6.

“ FOR THERE IS ONE GOD, AND ONE MEDIATOR
BETWEEN GOD AND MAN, THE MAN CHRIST
JESUS ; WHO GAVE HIMSELF A RANSOM FOR
ALL, TO BE TESTIFIED IN DUE TIME.”

IN this chapter, we have St. Paul directing Timothy in his doctrine, to exhort people to pray for all men ; for kings, and for those in authority ; and to persuade them hereunto, they were to consider that it was good, and acceptable to God, who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Not that God wills this, so as to purpose and decree it ; for then it would surely come to pass, that all men would be actually saved, and come to the saving knowledge of the truth : It is not this will of God, which is there meant ; but the expression there denotes, to us, the wonderful grace, and kindness of God, who instead of delighting in the death and misery of sinners, had rather that they should repent, turn, and live : But though he wills it, with such a will as that, yet we may not from thence conclude, that all will repent, turn, and live.

AND when in the text, Christ is said to give himself a ransom for all, we are not from thence to conclude, though that ransom be sufficient for the salvation of all, that it will in the event be applied

to all for their salvation; such a conclusion would be contrary to what the holy scriptures abundantly teach us, elsewhere.

It is wholly owing to that infinitely meritorious offering Christ made of himself in sacrifice, that all the redeemed are ransomed from everlasting death and misery, the wages of sin; and are ransomed unto eternal life, which all have forfeited, by sin.

It is by that one offering, Christ made of himself, that the holy spirit was purchased, and wholly in consideration thereof, that he is bestowed upon those who are savingly delivered from the guilt and power of sin; and made mete to be partakers at last, and forever, of the inheritance of saints in light.

It is wholly owing to that one offering Christ made of himself, that all who are favored with the gospel, do enjoy that special dispensation of God's grace: To the infinitely meritorious mediation of Christ, is wholly owing all that good which fallen mankind do enjoy; all the salvations, all the supplies of good, that fallen mankind partake of, are owing to the mediation of Christ; it is wholly owing thereto, that sinful, fallen mankind do in this world enjoy any, and so many outward salvations, and supplies of good of a temporal nature.

AND lastly here, Christ so gave himself a ransom for all, that whoever, amongst all mankind, wherever they live, will accept of offered mercy, and salvation, upon gospel terms, shall be made the happy partakers thereof.

MOREOVER, when Christ the only mediator between God and men, is here called the man Christ Jesus, we are no ways thereby led to conceive and believe concerning him, that he is but a man, or a mere creature: For that would be to conceive and believe contrary to what we are elsewhere in scrip-

ture taught and obliged to believe concerning him, as being both God and man. The apostle here speaking concerning Jesus Christ, doth in Rom. ix. 5. testify concerning him, that he is God over all, blessed for ever more ; and in the 3d of the context, God our Savior ; and in Tit. ii. 13. he doth stile him the great God, and, or as it may be rendered, even our Savior Jesus Christ ; meaning one and the same Being there spoken of, and not two, as some would conceive from the expression.

RELIGIOUS worship is paid to Christ, as in prayer, baptism, &c. which if he were a mere man, or a mere creature, would be but sinful idolatry : Works evidential of the eternal being, and perfections of God, particularly in Psal. cii. 25. are in Heb. i. 8. ascribed to Christ ; as effected by him, and ought to convince us of his real and proper deity. But unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God is forever and ever ; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom ; thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows : And thou Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands ; they shall perish, but thou remainest ; and they all shall wax old, as a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed ; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail.

THIS is a quotation from the 102d Psalm, where the psalmist is speaking of the true God ; but to whom does the apostle apply it, in Hebrews, before cited ? It is to Jesus the Son, expressly applied.

FURTHERMORE, Jehovah is a name or title, applicable to none but to the true God. Psal. lxxxiii. 18. That men may know thou whose name alone is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth : In

the diverse places; wherein that high and venerable name or title, is given to Christ, I shall mention but one, Jere. xxiii. 6. The Lord (or Jehovah) our righteousness: Indeed that title seems to be given to the church; as it is rendered in our bibles, Jer. xxxiii. 16. And this is the name wherewith she shall be called, The Lord our righteousness; but it may be read, He shall be called by her, the Lord our righteousness: That the glorious name, by which the church of Christ should call him, viz. The Lord our righteousness.

WHEN the apostle in the text, speaking of Christ, the only Mediator between God and men, calls him the man Christ Jesus, he would not have us from thence conceive and believe concerning Jesus Christ, that he is but merely man, for that would be contrary to the instructions of scripture in other places, obliging us to believe that he is truly God, as well as man.

HE in the text, speaks of Christ, the one only Mediator between God and men, calling him the man Christ Jesus, he would have us to be the more affectingly sensible of the wonderful condescension of Christ, who being God, yet became man, that he might mediate between the infinitely holy, and glorious God, and sinful men: The apostle in the text, speaks thus of Christ, that we may see, with much admiration, how wonderfully our nature is advanced, in Christ.

MY text contains truths, that are very essential to, and fundamental in religion, viz. The Being of God; and the Mediation of Jesus Christ.

THERE are these two truths, we may consider, when the apostle here saith, There is one God, viz. That there is a God; and that he is one.

I. WE are to consider the first truth, viz. That there is a God.

THE evidences, proving the certainty of the divine existence, are especially from the creation, preservation, and government of the world, and of all things by him; Rom. i. 19. Because that which may be known of God, is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them; for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; and the evidence thence arising to mankind, of the certainty of the divine existence, is very general, and extensive; Psal. xix. 1. The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth forth his handy work; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth forth knowledge; there is no speech, nor language, where their voice is not heard.

THE heavens and earth, the various creatures, stand forth as evidences, and proclaim aloud, as it were, to all nations, the certainty of the being of God, the Creator of them.

ST. Paul, observing the superstition of the Athenians, worshipping an unknown God, endeavors their conversion, and to persuade them to the acknowledgment and worship of the living and true God, he being the Maker, Preserver and Governor of the world, and of all things; Acts xvii. 24. God that made the world, and all things therein, seeing he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth unto all life and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men, to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitations; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from us; for it is in him that

we live, and move, and have our being. The evidences of the divine existence being so manifest and abundant, God never ordered (as I recollect) any miracle to be wrought to convince atheists of his being; though there were many miracles wrought upon other occasions.

IN the word of God, or the holy scriptures, we have a great multitude of testimonies of the certainty of the divine existence, which ought to have great weight with us, who enjoy not only the light of nature, but that of divine revelation, to convince and persuade us of the infinite knowledge, goodness and faithfulness of God, who therein is pleased to reveal himself and his will unto us.

AND it is there only that we have the certain knowledge of him, in his personal existence, as being the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; and the knowledge of that part, which each person performeth, particularly in the work of man's redemption.

II. As to the next truth, we are here led to consider, viz. That God is one; I need say only in few words, there can be but one being, as God is, from all eternity, uncreated, independent, and immutable; and to suppose any more than one such being to exist, would be to suppose a great inconsistency and absurdity.

MOSES, the man of God, would persuade Israel, that that God whom he exhorted them religiously to fear, love and obey, was the one only true God, in utter, and infinite distinction from all idols and false gods, Deut. vi. 4. "Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord."

III. THE apostle in the text, asserts concerning Jesus Christ, that he is the only mediator, between God and men. Now, saith he, Gal. iii. 20. a mediator, is not a mediator of one; but God is one.

A mediator is one that intervenes, or comes between two, or more contending parties; to adjust and make up differences between them.

IF man had continued in his first estate of innocency, there had been no need of a mediator between God and him; that Jesus Christ is mediator between God and men, implies, that there is a difference or difficulty between God and man: This difference, or difficulty was occasioned by man's sin and disobedience against God.

THE divine existence, appears from the light of nature, shining in, and from the works of creation and providence: But that there is a mediator between God and man; and that Jesus Christ is the one only mediator between a holy, offended God, and guilty offending man, and what Christ, as mediator hath done, and suffered in order for the restoration of peace, and amity between God and man; we are intirely dependant upon the holy scriptures for the knowledge of. As mediator, Jesus Christ hath by his obedience, both active and passive, secured the glory of God, and procured help and salvation for sinful, fallen men.

GOD, and man, by the sin of man, were become parties at variance with each other; Christ in his mediation, had a view and regard, both to the honor of God, and to the necessities, and necessary interest and good of sinful, perishing man. We may not so look to Christ's mediation with God, as to overlook his view therein to man; nor so look to the view therein he had to the relief and help of fallen man, as to overlook the view he in the whole of his mediation had to the honor and glory of God. We are directed, in Heb. iii. 1. to consider the apostle, and high priest of our profession, Jesus Christ; but we do not consider aright of Christ, as mediator, if in his mediation, we suppose he had a view, only to the necessities and necessary good of fallen man; and not to the honor and

glory of God; for therein he had a view and regard to both; Heb. ii. 17. In all things, it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest, in things pertaining unto God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. Not only a merciful high priest, to bring about salvation for man from sin and misery; but also faithful to the honor of God, and to the claims of his holy and righteous law; that salvation might come to, and be bestowed upon man in a way consistent with and promotive of the honor of God's holiness, justice and truth; yea, of all the divine perfections. Often do we find him saying that he came to do the will of his father; to whom, we find him in prayer appealing, John xvii. 4. I have glorified thee on earth; and when near to the dreadful hour of his sufferings, that was near his heart, John xii. 28, 29. Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say? Father save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour; Father glorify thy name; then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and I will glorify it again. Jesus Christ was the object of his Father's love and delight; not only as his eternal Son, but he was so in the whole of his mediation; but he would not have been so, if help and salvation should come to any of sinful, fallen men, in any way or degree, contrary to, or inconsistent with the honor of God: But by what Christ, as Mediator, hath done and suffered, mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other: All the divine perfections harmonize, and are glorified, in the everlasting salvation of all who are redeemed by Jesus Christ. Far more glory redounds to God, from the mediation of Christ, their Savior, than would from their everlasting destruction and misery.

I CANNOT see how it could be so, if Christ was only man, or a mere creature, though of the most ex-

cellent order, or of the highest conceivable created capacities ; for then the whole of his obedience would have been due to him, who gave him those high qualifications and capacities ; and what would he then have to give for the saving help, and relief of guilty, perishing sinners of the human race ?

BUT the dignity of his divine nature, conveyed an infinite merit to the obedience he yielded, and to the sufferings he endured in his human nature ; which he had taken into personal union with his divine nature : That he might be capable of yielding obedience, and of enduring sufferings, he became incarnate : But who was he that became incarnate ? We are told in John first, that it was that word who was in the beginning with God, and was God, who made all things that are made ; then in the 14th verse of that chapter, the evangelist saith, The word was made flesh, &c. That is a great and incomprehensible mystery, 1. Tim. iii. 16. Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness ; God was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the gentiles, believed on in the world, and received up into glory. When Christ became incarnate, God was manifested in the flesh ; it must be a given case, that no creature can be the author of its own being ; but if Christ is but a mere creature, he must be the author of his own being, for we are assured, John i. 3. that by him (the word) all things were made, that are made.

CHRIST as mediator, became incarnate ; perfectly obeyed the precepts of the divine law ; and at last died the accursed death of the cross, to make atonement for sin, to honor and satisfy the law and justice of God, and to procure salvation for sinners.

AND now he is glorified in heaven, he lives forever, making continual intercession ; in which before-mentioned instances, consists his mediation ; and what he did and suffered, when he was upon earth must be

considered as the ground of his intercession which he is continually carrying on, now he is in heaven ; it is that which he continually pleads in the presence of God, as the ground on which proceeds the mercy of God, towards sinful fallen men, in the bestowment of providential favors. Audience of prayer, acceptance of your persons and services in that, and every other duty, or in their final acceptance to everlasting life and happiness. Fallen sinful man can have nothing to do, safely or successfully with God, without him, the mediator ; for out of Christ the mediator, God is a consuming fire to sinners ; but in and through Christ the mediator, he is the God of all mercy and grace, ready to hear and answer prayer, and to bestow his needed favors upon those who seek to him therefor in Christ's name.

IN the text, the apostle saith, there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

THIS truth is asserted with a like peremptoriness, as that foregoing ; there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, even the man Christ Jesus.

No mediator of reconciliation, but he, 2. Cor. v. 19. God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself. It is in Christ, and in none other, that God is reconciling the world unto himself. It is only by the mediation of Christ that any of the sinful, fallen world of mankind, can become reconciled to God, and interested in his favor : Jesus Christ is the only mediator of intercession ; also 1. John ii. 1. My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not ; and if any man sin, we have an advocate with the father, Jesus Christ the righteous : None other worthy ; none other appointed of God, to that high and important office, and place of being mediator between God and men, but Jesus Christ : It is only through the oblation he made of himself, that any of the sinful world of mankind, are ransomed from everlasting death and misery unto everlasting life and happiness.

V. THAT there is salvation for sinners, by Jesus Christ, who gave himself a ransom for their redemption, of which they shall all actually partake, who believe in him, is a precious truth, to be testified in due time: God's time is due time indeed: Gospel time is due time; and it is a truth abundantly testified to us in the gospel; yea, it is what the prophets, with the apostles, concur in giving witness unto; Acts x. 43. To him gave all the prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins.

AND having thus noticed the several truths contained in the text, I would now pass to mention some uses, by way of *IMPROVEMENT* of the subject:

1. LET us, as it doth greatly concern us, have a firm and lively belief of the divine existence, or that there is in very deed one only living and true God; this is a truth which lays at the foundation of all true religion; and very needful for us to have a firm and lively belief of; that we may be the more guarded against atheistical thoughts and suggestions, which are so mischievous and hurtful both to our duty and comfort.

2. LET us hence learn more to realize the evil of sin. Sin must needs be a great evil, which hath made such a breach between God and man, that nothing could heal, or make up, but the mediation of Christ, or what he as mediator, hath done, and suffered. It is (methinks) but mere arrogancy to say, God might have taken some other way for the salvation of sinful fallen man, than the mediation of Christ; seeing that was the only way, that infinite wisdom and mercy saw fit and sufficient, in which sinners are to be saved; and we ought from thence to realize the more the great and fearful evil of sin, which has made such a sad breach between God and man that nothing could suffice to heal and make it up, so as to bring God and

man together, in a state of amity, reconciliation and peace, but the mediation of Christ.

3. LET us hence be the more sensible of the kindness of divine mercy and grace, in the provision made of a mediator between God and man, even Jesus Christ.

THAT when none of fallen mankind, could come unto God in any of the duties of religion, with acceptance, or into a state of reconciliation, peace and communion with him, on account of any worthiness, or righteousness of their own; that there is such liberty as is granted to us, of approach to God, and to hope for his acceptance of us, in the way of gospel ordinances; and at death, and in the end of the world, through the infinite mercy of Christ, the only mediator between God and men; is such provision as calls for our sincere and fervent thankfulness to the infinite wisdom and mercy of God, for making it for us.

4. How sincerely thankful ought we to be, for the light of divine revelation afforded to us? Particularly for the gospel revelation, and testimony concerning Jesus Christ, the one only mediator between God and men?

MANY who have not enjoyed those special means of instruction, yet have been sensible they needed some more worthy being, than themselves, to mediate between God and themselves, and being ignorant of Christ the only mediator, have acknowledged and depended upon a great variety of mediators. How thankful ought we to be, for scripture revelation, we are favored with? Particularly for the gospel revelation and testimony (we enjoy) concerning Christ, the only mediator between God and man; and that in the gospel we are so fully informed of what Christ has become, done, and suffered, and is still doing, as mediator and intercessor; whose mediation is the only ground of the christian's hope of pardon, access to, and communion with God; and of final acceptance

with him unto eternal life ; Heb. xii. 24, 25. Ye are come unto mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels ; to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect ; and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.

5. CORDIALLY thankful should we be to the Lord Jesus Christ, for his becoming a mediator between God and men :

THAT he interposed, as mediator between God, offended, and guilty offending man : That Christ gave himself, as he did, in the way of obedience, both active and passive, that he might bring honor to God ; and ransom sinners, even all who believe in him, from the curse of the holy and righteous law of God, and from his intolerable and everlasting vengeance and wrath. Oh ! how thankful ought we to be to the Lord Jesus Christ, for his wonderful kindness in thus becoming a Mediator between God and men ? That he might purchase for, and bestow upon sinful men, even upon all who submit to, and believe in him, according to the gospel, both grace and glory ; salvation from everlasting wrath and misery, unto everlasting life and happiness.

6. HENCE see the duty of cordially submitting to, and believing in Jesus Christ, the only Mediator, between God and man ; the only Savior of sinners. The promises in the gospel, of the saving blessings of Christ's mediation, are made only to believers in him ; until we believe in Christ, we are out of him, the one only Mediator ; and have to do with God, as an absolute God, which must be a fearful estate to be in !

ON the other hand, God becomes a reconciled God and Father, to all who do truly believe in Jesus Christ ;

are made nigh to God, through the mediation of Christ, who is the beloved Son of God. Jesus Christ gave himself; and that oblation he made of himself, was of such infinite merit, that it laid a fundamental atonement for the sin of the whole world, and is sufficient for the salvation of the whole world; and all who do truly believe in him, the one only Mediator and Savior, shall receive the saving benefits of his mediation. God is not only merciful and gracious, but is just in justifying and saving all such; Rom. iii. 24. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood; to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God: To declare, I say at this time, his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.

IN the infinitely momentous, and important concern of our salvation, we may not think to be wiser than were the apostles; how they sought and hoped for it, we are informed in Gal. ii. 16. Knowing that a man is not justified by the deeds of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified, by the faith of Jesus Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

7. LET us then be persuaded to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, the only Mediator between God and men; and the only Savior of sinners. It much concerns us to hear and obey the commanding direction of the word, 1. John iii. 23. And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son, Jesus Christ. To believe in Christ, is indispensibly necessary, in order to yield the obedience of the gospel, and in order to secure the salvation of our souls. Mark xvi. 16. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned. Acts xvi. 31. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

FINALLY, we may hence see, that in all our religious addresses to God, we should make them in the name, and with dependance upon the mediation of Christ, in order for acceptance with God, in him; whether it be in prayer, or any of the ordinances of the gospel, and duties of religion, we are to depend upon the infinite worthiness of Christ, for acceptance in the sight of an infinitely holy, and righteous God; Collos. iii. 17. And whatsoever ye do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus; giving thanks to God, and the Father, by him.

AND now, to the one only true God, through Jesus Christ, the one only Mediator between God and men, be all religious honor, and praise ascribed, forever, AMEN.



s
a
i
y
e
d
r
s
n
e
o
t
r
;
o
t
t
y
n
f
g
i
d
f
ll
s
e
l
e
e
y
g
t
r